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Strong positive identification with a specific group is potentially both functional and dysfunctional for the solidarity of an encompassing larger social system. The impact of strong ethnic group identification upon societal integration is here explored by analyzing data obtained from 515 Negroes as part of the Cornell Studies in Intergroup Relations. Independent three-item measures of militant group pride and general group disparagement provide a means of classifying respondents as positive, negative, or ambivalent in their orientation toward the in-group. Group identification is related to a variety of measures of orientation toward non-Negroes (e.g., anti-white prejudice) and the general society (e.g., community identification), and the data consistently reveal a significant positive relation between ethnic group identification and orientation toward the broader society. (Author)

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MINORITY GROUP IDENTIFICATION AND SOCIETAL INTEGRATION

(Abstract)

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Strong positive identification with a specific group is potentially both functional and dysfunctional for the solidarity of an encompassing larger social system. The impact of strong ethnic group identification upon societal integration is here explored by analyzing data obtained from 515 Negroes as part of the Cornell Studies in Intergroup Relations. Independent three item measures of militant group pride and general group disparagement provide a means of classifying respondents as positive, negative or ambivalent in their orientation toward the in-group. Group identification is related to a variety of measures of orientation toward non-Negroes (e.g., anti-white prejudice) and the general society (e.g., community identification), and the data consistently reveal a significant positive relation between ethnic group identification and orientation toward the broader society.

Militant minority group identification can be functional for societal integration. However, other kinds of group pride (e.g., ethnocentrism) may have different consequences and even militant group pride is not invariably functional. Rather militant pride is functional only insofar as the members of the group perceive the larger society as supportive of their objectives. This qualification is illustrated by a discussion of the Black Muslims, Jews and union-management relations. The implications for pluralism and assimilation as intergroup goals are noted.

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MINORITY GROUP IDENTIFICATION AND SOCIETAL INTEGRATION*

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It is virtually tautological, but nonetheless highly significant, to note that effective societal integration is a pre-requisite of societal functioning. Thus Heilbroner has commented that:

> We are rich, not as individuals, but as members of a rich society, and our easy assumption of material sufficiency is actually only as reliable as the bonds which forge us into a social whole.[1]

Social theorists have long emphasized the fundamental importance of integration in any society but its determinants and precise functioning have rarely been empirically investigated. Taking as our point of departure Grodzins' observation that democratic national loyalty is founded upon loyalty to the various constituent sub-groups (family, clique, church, etc.),[2] the present intent is to focus upon the consequences of ethnic identification for societal integration.

In complex, multi-ethnic societies, loyalty to a particular ethnic group is fraught with explosive potential for the society as the case of South Africa dramatically illustrates. Paramount loyalty to one sub-group or segment of the society is often disruptive or dysfunctional for the total society.[3] However, positive group identification or loyalty (of some kind) is essential to the viability of any given group in a multi-group environment, and ethnic group identification is not necessarily dysfunctional for society. It is dysfunctional only insofar

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as the sentiments of loyalty promote conflict between sub-groups (or between a sub-group and the society) and, hence, mal-integration of the larger social system. If the society's dominant intergroup goal is pluralism instead of assimilation, ethnic identification can clearly be functional for societal integration. Moreover, strong ethnic identification is here hypothesized to be functional for the total society even when (complete) assimilation is the ultimate goal insofar as the ethnic identification is oriented toward attainment of the full equality pre-requisite to assimilation and loss of minority group identity.

Unfortunately, the positive aspects of intergroup relations have largely been neglected by social scientists in favor of the more dramatic intergroup tensions involving prejudice, discrimination and conflict with the result that the "normal functioning of American pluralism" is not well understood.[4] Data from the (landmark) Cornell Studies of Intergroup Relations[5] are here utilized to explore the relationship between minority group identification and societal integration in hopes of partially illumining the "normal functioning" of contemporary American racial pluralism. More specifically interview data from a probability sample of 515 Negroes in two American cities are analyzed to test a series of hypotheses derived from the general proposition that militant ethnic identification among Negro Americans is functional for the integration of American society.

The present measure of group identification utilizes independent measures of militant group pride and general group disparagement inasmuch as group identification is a multi-dimensional phenomenon which cannot be

adequately measured along a single continuum.[6] Group pride is manifested by a negative response to two or all three of the following items:

1. I don't worry much about the race problem because I know I can't do anything about it.

2. Do you ever get the feeling that it is just not worth fighting for equal treatment for Negroes in this town?

3. Negroes shouldn't go in business establishments where they think they're not wanted.

Group disparagement is manifested by an affirmative response to two or all three of the following items:

1. Negroes blame white people for their position but it's really their own fault.

2. Negroes are always shouting about their rights but have nothing to offer.

3. Generally speaking, Negroes are lazy and ignorant.

Hereafter we shall label as Identifiers those persons who manifest group pride but not disparagement, as Disparagers those persons who manifest disparagement but not pride and as Ambivalents those persons who manifest equivalent amounts of pride and disparagement. Societal integration is measured by a variety ofindirect, discrete measures including community identification, anti-white and anti-minority prejudice, attitude toward and reported (probable) behavior with respect to assimilation, and political participation.

Presentation of Data

The community identification index of societal integration is the following item:

> Do you feel more like a member of this community--that is, all the white and Negro people who live in this town; or more like a member of the Negro community of the United States as a whole?

The data presented in Table 1 demonstrate that minority group identification among Negroes is positively related to identification with the local community. Two-thirds of the Identifiers but less than half of the Disparagers feel greater identification with the local community than with the United States Negro Community. This is consistent with the general proposition stated above and additional measures of societal integration strengthen our confidence in this generalization.

Thus, militant group pride is also associated positively with societal solidarity as measured by the relative absence of prejudice toward out-groups. Identifiers are significantly less likely than Disparagers to manifest anti-white prejudice, anti-minority prejudice or generalized prejudice (see Table 2) as measured by combining the other two indices of prejudice. This is consistent with Stokely Carmichael's observation that"'Pro-black' has never meant 'anti-white' - unless whites make it so." The inverse relationship between in-group and out-group attitudes which characterizes ethnocentric group pride is not inherent in positive group identification but only in identification of a specific type (i.e., ethnocentrism). Not only is social distance prejudice more common among the Disparagers but general hostility toward and suspicion of whites are also significantly more common. These attitudes are obviously detrimental to societal solidarity.

Beyond the realm of disengaged attitudes, a variety of indices

affirm that Identifiers are also more identified with the general society in that they are more favorably disposed toward assimilation (in both formal and informal settings) than are Disparagers and they are more likely to engage in intimate interracial social contacts. Tables 3 through 6 indicate that:

1. Identifiers are significantly more likely to favor neighborhood desegregation than are Disparagers.

2. Identifiers are significantly less likely than Disparagers to manifest defensive insulation--i.e., a tendency to avoid intergroup situations for fear of rebuff, rejection or some other manifestation of group discrimination.

3. Identifiers significantly more often report that they would enter an impersonal "market" situation even though they were "pretty sure" Negroes were not welcome. (Exposing oneself to such unpleasant, potentially hostile situations is, of course, essential if legal desegregation is to be ultimately converted into de facto desegregation.)

4. Identifiers are significantly more likely than Disparagers to participate in intimate equalitarian social contacts with whites.

These data indicate that Negroes who are militantly identified with the minority group are consistently more favorably inclined toward integration, both in attitude and action, than are Negroes who disparage the in-group. Hence, the data once again affirm that a militant minority group identification promotes societal solidarity for interracial integration, or at least the unobstructed opportunity for such, is absolutely essential to the maintenance of a tolerable degree of solidarity in American society in the decades to come. Finally, insofar as political participation is essential to solidarity in a democracy, the basic generalization is further underscored by the finding (see Table 7) that Identifiers are significantly more likely to participate in the

political life of the community (as indexed by voting) than are Disparagers.

Generalization and Qualification of the Basic Finding

The Cornell data thus consistently accord with the general proposition that a militant minority group pride uncontaminated by group disparagement--i.e., an unequivocally positive group identification--can be functional for the integration of the total society. Note that we do not suggest that all kinds of group pride are functional for the larger social system of which the group is a part. Indeed, chauvinistic group pride is invariably dysfunctional for the integration of a pluralist society, and even militant group pride is functional only insofar as the members of the specific group perceive the larger system as supporting their efforts to achieve or maintain certain (major) group goals. The consequences of identification by the members of a variety of groups conform to this interpretation.

The Black Muslim and the earlier black nationalist movements are easily explained. Clearly the Muslim movement emphasizes and seeks to develop a strong group pride. Indeed, Lincoln has indicated that the radically altered conception of self associated with the development of such pride is one of the chief functions of the movement for the Negro community (and, indirectly, for the society as a whole).[7] But few, if any, would argue that the movement is directly functional for the general society. We suggest that Muslim militancy is basically dysfunctional as regards its members' identification and solidarity

with the general society simply because the goals of the movement are at odds with those of the national society and are, therefore, not supported by the society.[8]

Various other salient groups manifest goals which receive national support, and hence the solidarity and positive identification of their members as group members is simultaneously conducive to identification with the nation--i.e., to national solidarity. The writings of Herberg and Yinger suggest such a conclusion with respect to group identification among Jews.[9] Recent research indicates that many Jews desire to maintain a distinct Jewish social community.[10] This, however, is not inconsistent with an identification with American society which promotes national solidarity. Identification with Judaism (even symbolic Judaism) heightens identification with America because religious diversity (and separatism) is an accepted part of the American way of life. Separatism along religious lines is not only tolerated but is supported by the national government. (This has rarely been true of ethnic separatism). Thus again the compatibility of societal and ethnic goals provides an identity between minority group identification and societal integration.

Another area of intergroup tension and conflict--union-management relations--provides a final example consistent with the general proposition advanced here. Dean has observed that "where the union is well established and the relationship with management is essentially constructive, it is not the 'malcontents' but the 'solid citizens' among the rank and file who are most likely to be active in the union."[11] The "solid citizens" are those whose identification with the plant community is manifested in job satisfaction, lengthy service and leisure-time social

activity with fellow plant workers. In contrast, where union-management relations have been "continuously and overtly antagonistic," anti-management sentiment is equally as important as social integration (into the plant community) in determining identification with the union (as measured by attendance at union meetings).

Conclusions

The available data from Negro Americans and a brief comparative analysis thus provide support for a significant qualification of the generalization that loyalty to the total group is a product of loyalty to the constituent sub-groups. Only insofar as the total group is perceived as supportive of the sub-group will it receive the loyalty of those strongly identified with the sub-group.[12] In short, militant identification with a sub-group is functional or dysfunctional for the total group dependent upon the compatibility of the goals and the nature of the relationship between the group and the sub-group.

Certainly this generalization is harmonious with a pluralist conception of the "good society" inasmuch as the supporting data encourage the belief that pluralism (social or cultural) is compatible with the maintenance of a stable, unified society. Unity can be forged out of continued diversity and thus pluralism remains a viable alternative to total assimilation. From the assimilationist perspective, however, the same data reaffirm the realism of working toward seemingly contradictory goals--i.e., strengthening group identification among minority persons while simultaneously struggling to achieve their complete integration into American society. It is

undoubtedly true that minority group pride and increasing acceptance by the majority are compatible only within limits,[13] but until the as yet unspecified upper limit is reached group pride is indispensable to an effective attack upon discrimination and the resultant inequalities which prevent genuine racial integration. Practical considerations aside, the relationship between group identification and societal integration poses a significant problem for further research because it goes to the crux of sociology's central theoretical question--the question of how order is achieved, maintained and altered in social systems.

Footnotes

1. Robert L. Heilbroner, The Making of Economic Society, (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1962), p. 4.
2. Morton Grodzins, The Loyal and the Disloyal (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), p. 29. Also see Lawrence H. Fuchs, "Minority Groups and Foreign Policy," Political Science Quarterly, 1959, 74, 161-175.
3. See St. Clair Drake, "Some Observations on Interethnic Conflict as One Type of Intergroup Conflict," Journal of Conflict Resolution, 1957, 1, 155-178 and Robert K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1957, Rev. Ed.), p. 27.
4. Oscar Handlin, "Historical Perspectives on the American Ethnic Group," Daedalus, 1961, 90, 220-232.
5. Robin M. Williams, Jr., et al., Strangers Next Door (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964) presents a detailed analysis of the voluminous data collected for the Cornell Studies. Chapters 2 and 8 are particularly relevant to the present analysis.
6. A conceptual analysis of group identification is presented in Donald L. Noel, "Group Identification Among Negroes: An Empirical Analysis," Journal of Social Issues, 1964, 20 (#2), 71-84. See esp. pp. 71-74.
7. C. Eric Lincoln, The Black Muslims in America (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), Ch. 9. See also E. U. Essien-Udom, Black Nationalism: A Search for an Identity in America (Chicago, Univ. of Chicago Press, 1962), Ch. 4.

8. Muslim alienation from the general society is manifested in their refusal to participate in the political process. By contrast militant young college Negroes are not alienated from but are strongly identified with (middle class) American society: see Ruth Searles and J. Allen Williams, Jr., "Negro College Students' Participation in Sit-Ins," Social Forces, 1962, 40, 215-220. While Muslims are militant in their advocacy of resistance, Muslim group pride is fundamentally ethnocentric or chauvinistic--i.e., characterized by a "tendency to assert or defend the in-group, right or wrong, and to accept positive stereotypes about the in-group." Noel, op. cit., p. 72.

9. Will Herberg, Protestant-Catholic-Jew (New York: Doubleday, 1955) and J. Milton Yinger "Social Forces Involved in Group Identification or Withdrawal," Daedalus, 1961, 90, 247-262.

10. Erich Rosenthal, "Acculturation Without Assimilation? The Jewish Community of Chicago, Illinois," American Journal of Sociology, 1960, 66, 275-88 and Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan, Beyond the Melting Pot (Cambridge, Mass: The M.I.T. Press and Harvard University Press, 1963), esp. pp. 159-164.

11. Lois R. Dean, "Social Integration, Attitudes and Union Activity," Industrial and Labor Relations Review, 1954, 8, 48-58; quote is from p. 52 (emphasis added). See also the same author's "Union Activity and Dual Loyalty," Industrial and Labor Relations Review, 1954, 7, 526-536.

12. Grodzins makes the qualification explicit in noting that "Populations are loyal to nation as a by-product of satisfactions achieved within non-national groups, because the nation is believed to symbolize and sustain those groups." Op. cit., p. 29 (emphasis added.)

13. This point is made by Miriam Riemann in her review of Arnold Rose's The Negro's Morale in Commentary, 1950, 10, 404-406.

TABLE 1

Group Identification is Associated Positively
With Community Identification

Community Identification[a]	Group Identification: Identifiers (229)	Ambivalents (180)	Disparagers (106)
Local	68%	53	48
U.S. Negro	32	47	52

$x^2 = 16.1$, df = 2, $p < .001$

a) Community identification is indexed by the following item:

Do you feel more like a member of this community---that is, all the white and Negro people who live in this town; or more like a member of the Negro community of the United States as a whole?

TABLE 2

Group Identification is Negatively Related to Generalized Prejudice

Generalized Prejudice [a]	Group Identification: Identifiers (229)	Ambivalents (180)	Disparagers (106)
High	18%	24	42
Medium	27	42	32
Low	54	34.	25

$x^2 = 39.2$, df = 4, $p < .001$

a) Generalized prejudice is measured by a three item social-distance measure of anti-white prejudice combined with three items which measure (anti-minority) prejudice toward foreigners, Mexicans and Jews. In each case the respondent is classified as prejudiced if he affirms two or all three index items except that in Bakersfield a Negro is classified as prejudiced toward whites if he endorses one or more of the social-distance items. Respondent is considered to be high in generalized prejudice if he manifests both anti-white and anti-minority prejudice, medium if he exhibits one but not the other and low if he exhibits neither. The three items which measure anti-minority prejudice are:

1. This country would be better off if there were not so many foreigners here.
2. Generally speaking, Mexicans are shiftless and dirty.
3. Do you think you would ever find it a little distasteful to go to a party and find that most of the people are Jewish?

TABLE 3

Group Identification is Associated Positively
With Approval of Residential Desegregation

Attitude toward Residential Desegregation[a)]	Group Identification: Identifiers (229)	Ambivalents (180)	Disparagers (106)
Favorable	76%	60	21
Unfavorable	24	40	79

$x^2 = 93.2$, df = 2, $p < .001$

a) Respondent is classified as favorable toward residential desegregation if he <u>disagrees</u> with the following item: "Negroes should live around their own people." A similar item, available in Savannah only, reveals the same relation to group identification. The item is: "Do you approve or disapprove of Negroes living in mixed neighborhoods with whites in Savannah?"

TABLE 4

Group Identification is Negatively Related
To Defensive Insulation

	Group Identification		
Defensive Insulation[a)]	Identifiers (229)	Ambivalents (180)	Disparagers (106)
Yes	16%	28	56
No	84	72	44

$x^2 = 57.3$, df = 2, $p < .001$

a) Defensive insulation is manifested by an agree response to the following item: "It is best to stay away from white people; then you will avoid all embarrassing situations."

TABLE 5

Group Identification is Positively Related to Assimilation into an Impersonal Situation

Intergroup Response[a]	Group Identification: Identifiers (229)	Ambivalents (180)	Disparagers (106)
Assimilation	24%	14	7
Avoidance	76	86	93

$x^2 = 16.8$; df = 2, $p < .001$

a) Assimilation-avoidance is indexed by the following: "Suppose you were downtown with a group of your Negro friends and they asked you to go with them into a department store that you were pretty sure didn't serve Negroes. Would you go?" Assimilation is indicated by an affirmative response. (Note that these are 1950 data--we might anticipate a considerable higher proportion of assimilation responses in the 1960's).

TABLE 6

Group Identification is Associated Positively
With Interracial Social Contact

Social Contact[a)]	Group Identification: Identifiers (229)	Ambivalents (180)	Disparagers (106)
Yes	18%	16	6
No	82	84	94

$x^2 = 9.0$, df = 2, $p < .02$

a) Respondent is considered to have social contact with whites if he does something of a "social" nature (e.g., going to a sports event together or visiting in each other's homes) with any of the whites with whom he has contact.

TABLE 7

Group Identification is Positively Related
To Voting in a Presidential Election

Political Participation[a)]	Identifiers (229)	Ambivalents (180)	Disparagers (106)
Yes	54%	48	26
No	46	52	74

$x^2 = 22.3$, df = 2, $p < .001$

a) Participation is indexed by response to the following item:

"Did you vote in the last Presidential election?"